

## **LAWRENCE TOWNSHIP PLANNING AREA**

### **Critical Area 1**

**Location:** Southwest corner of 96<sup>th</sup> and Masters Road.

**Why critical:** The south side of 96<sup>th</sup> Street, west of Masters Road, is solidly residential until reaching Allisonville Road. The four parcels immediately west of 96<sup>th</sup> Street and Masters Road total approximately 8.5 acres and are under development pressure. If retail development should be allowed on these four parcels then several more parcels farther west on 96<sup>th</sup> Street would be in line to convert to retail development as well. It is critical to protect the existing residential nature to the west of Masters Road from any additional retail development encroachment.

#### **Recommendations:**

- Restrict commercial retail development to the east side of Masters Road.
- Allow office development to occur on the four parcels to act as a buffer between the regional commercial to the east of Masters Road, and the residential neighborhoods to the west.
- All four parcels should be developed in a compatible way, as one project if possible, and avoid piecemeal development.
- Any new office development should be integrated, well buffered from the neighboring residences, have access only onto 96<sup>th</sup> Street and Masters Road, use only low level signage, and shield lighting to avoid spillage onto neighboring properties.
- All parcels should share two exit/entrances on 96<sup>th</sup> Street. All parcels should share these exit/entrances whether as one project development or as piecemeal development.
- Conservation of the Heath Ditch stream bed and surrounding trees is of particular importance. These should be adapted into any future development plans for the site, whether as one development, or as parcels are developed piecemeal.
- Retain the existing vegetative cover that shades Heath Ditch. Replant new growth as needed to maintain the integrity of Heath ditch.

## **Critical Area 2**

**Location:** Southeast corner of 96<sup>th</sup> Street and Village Drive

**Why critical:** The south side of 96<sup>th</sup> Street, east of Village Drive is solidly residential properties. There is no natural barrier east of Village Drive to stop the process of commercial encroachment on the south side of 96<sup>th</sup> Street. It is critical to protect the existing residential developments east of Village Drive from commercial development. If commercial development should be allowed east of Village Drive, other parcels farther east on 96<sup>th</sup> Street will be in line to convert to retail development as well. Future road widening projects may take additional right of way that would prevent adequate parking for any new commercial.

### **Recommendations:**

- Restrict retail and office development to the west of Village Drive as shown on map.
- Retail and office development should not encroach upon areas of existing or planned residential development.
- Any new commercial development west of Village Drive, should be integrated with existing commercial, well buffered from the neighboring residences, have access only onto 96th and Village Drive, provide sidewalks along Village Drive if applicable, use only low level signage, and shield lighting to avoid spillage onto neighboring properties.

### **Critical Area 3**

#### **Location: Geist Reservoir Dam area**

**Why critical:** Access is limited to the Indy Parks trail system that follows along Fall Creek below Geist Reservoir dam. It is critical to protect possible public access to the trail system that follows along Fall Creek River, south of Geist dam. The area is in a designated Wellhead Protection Area.

#### **Recommendations:**

- Do not allow any further retail development to occur in the area, due to high traffic and the environmentally sensitive nature of the area.
- Maintain the greenway along Fall Creek as a conservation corridor with access points for hiking. Development within this area should not reduce the tree canopy. Dense vegetative cover along stream banks is important for erosion control, contaminant capture, water cooling (critical for retaining oxygen levels) and habitat preservation.
- Protect the wetlands within this area. Wetlands contribute to stream water quality by holding and filtering storm water.
- Conservation of the oldest and highest quality portions of the woodlands is of particular importance.
- In places steep slopes define the edges of the stream valley. These slopes should be minimally developed, if at all, so that they may retain their forest cover and avoid soil erosion.
- Develop a pedestrian/bicycle pathway along Fall Creek Parkway, along the edge of this critical area as shown in the Lawrence Township Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan.
- Development within proximity of the Wellfield Protection Area should be mindful of possible chemical contamination of the ground water.

## **Critical Area 4**

**Location:** Indian Lake Watershed area

**Why critical:** Indian Creek is the principal tributary that empties into Indian Lake, a 60-acre, private man-made lake. Indian Lake has been silting in for the past 70 years. The silting has been increasing in the past 20 years. Land use change is believed to be the cause of the additional silting. It is critical to protect Indian Lake from additional silting and erosion. Stream bank erosion is directly related to storm water runoff from increased impervious areas, or increased sheet erosion from development. The area is in a designated Wellhead Protection Area.

It is critical to protect Indian Lake from over development. On the north side of Indian Lake, there is a tract of land that was platted in 1930 for a higher density residential development than the surrounding area. Although development has never occurred it is possible for this area to be developed in the future. It is critical that this area around Gerson Drive, Marie Drive and Helena Drive not be developed according to the plat. Development of the current plat in this area would be a detriment to the environmental and aesthetic qualities of Indian Lake and incompatible with the character of the overall area.

### **Recommendations:**

- There are steep slopes greater than 10% surrounding the lake and natural woodlands that need to be protected. These slopes should be minimally developed, if at all, so that they may retain their forest cover and avoid soil erosion.
- Development within the critical area should provide substantial conservation of the tree canopy. Dense vegetative cover is important for erosion control, contaminant capture, water cooling (critical for retaining oxygen levels) and habitat preservation.
- Protect the wetlands within this area. Wetlands contribute to stream water quality by holding and filtering storm water.
- Development within proximity of the Wellfield Protection Area should be mindful of possible chemical contamination of the ground water.
- Replat the area around Gerson Drive, Marie Drive and Heleana Drive to reflect the surrounding area's level of density.

## **Critical Area 5**

**Location:** Extending 50 feet on either side of the banks of Indian Creek from Indian Lake Boulevard to German Church Road, south of 56<sup>th</sup> Street.

**Why critical:** It is critical to protect Indian Creek as a future part of the City's greenway network. Residential growth in the area has increased the demand for additional greenspace, which Indian Creek can provide for existing and future populations. There are some high quality woodlands and slopes greater than 10% in the area.

### **Recommendations:**

- Maintain the greenway along Indian Creek as a conservation corridor as shown in the Indianapolis Greenways Plan. Access points behind Craig Middle School and Forest Glenn Elementary School will be established. Development within this area should not reduce the tree canopy. Dense vegetative cover along stream banks is important for erosion control, contaminant capture, water cooling (critical for retaining oxygen levels) and habitat preservation. Development within proximity of the greenway should also be mindful of soil erosion and possible chemical contamination of the creek's water.
- Conservation of the oldest and highest quality portions of the woodlands is of particular importance.
- In places, steep slopes define the edges of the stream valley. These slopes should be minimally developed, if at all, so that they may retain their forest cover and avoid soil erosion.

## **Critical Area 6**

**Location:** Oaklandon

**Why critical:** The town of Oaklandon originally developed as a distinct village. Over the years the city of Lawrence has grown out to include it. To maintain Oaklandon's identity as a distinct place it has been designated as Village Mixed Use. To retain the small town character of Oaklandon it is critical to protect the current development patterns (mix of land uses; and the size, shape and location of buildings on their sites). It is also critical to preserve the existing residential neighborhoods of Oaklandon. Residents have potentially good connectivity to schools, neighborhood retail, office-oriented businesses, Veteran's Park and the proposed Indian Creek greenway.

### **Recommendations:**

- Development along Pendleton Pike should continue to be a mix of retail, office, civic and residential uses. Sidewalks should be incorporated in any new development.
- Future development within the critical area should reflect the existing pattern of streets, lots and sidewalks.
- Pedestrian linkages should be provided with any new development to connect residential areas to reduce dependency of automobile in the immediate village area.
- Existing small-scale neighborhood based commercial should be maintained along Oaklandon Road to the north of Pendleton Pike. Strip center development is not appropriate.
- Restrict encroachment of commercial uses into the solidly residential areas of Oaklandon located on the north side of Pendleton Pike.
- Pedestrian connectivity should be strengthened throughout the critical area by the construction and upkeep of sidewalks, paths, and safe street crossings.
- Restrict light industrial development south of Pendleton Pike to allow for more pedestrian friendly access to Veteran's Park.
- Develop a pathway along the south side of the railroad to connect to the future Indian Creek Greenway.

## **Critical Area 7**

**Location:** North of 38<sup>th</sup> Street, east of German Church Road, south of 46<sup>th</sup> Street, and east of Carroll Road.

**Why critical:** In order to protect the opportunity to establish a distinct community with small town character, and traditional development patterns, this area was recommended for Village Mixed Use. It has the potential to be developed as a mixed-use neighborhood where the various parts are well integrated and are easily walkable. Residents have potentially good connectivity to a future school, neighborhood retailing, office-oriented businesses, and recreational opportunities. Steele Ditch, a part of Indian Creek, is critical for its natural qualities, including its function as a floodway and floodplain and for the woodland that surrounds it. Steele Ditch is also critical as a link in the greenway system that can connect various neighborhoods, schools, retail centers and parks, while reducing dependency on the automobile.

Potential development in this area should focus on design issues related to architecture, building size, parking, landscaping and lighting to promote a pedestrian oriented “village” or small-town atmosphere, rather than focusing on residential density. The Village Mixed Use mapping standards identifies large scale freestanding retail uses and heavy industrial development as inappropriate for this area.

It is critical to protect Steele Ditch as a future part of the City’s greenway network. Residential growth in the area has increased the demand for additional green space, which Steele Ditch can provide for existing and future populations. There are some high quality woodlands and slopes greater than 10% in the area that should be protected as well.

### **Recommendations:**

- A village center should be established close to 38<sup>th</sup> Street and Carroll Road to take advantage of public transportation and visibility afforded by the intersection of two well traveled streets.
- The village center should incorporate a large public green that will provide open space for area residents to gather and interact.
- “Big box” commercial, suburban type strip malls and suburban type apartment communities are inappropriate for the designated Village Mixed-Use area.
- Residential areas should radiate northwest from the village center towards the parkway that follows along the south side of Steele Ditch.
- Residential development densities should vary from compact single-family residential development and small-scale multi-family residential development near the Village center and progress to lower densities towards Steele Ditch.
- Neighborhood amenities should include pocket parks, streetlights and internal connections to adjacent neighborhoods.
- Pedestrian connectivity should be strengthened throughout the critical area by the construction and upkeep of sidewalks, paths, and safe street crossings.
- 42nd Street should remain as a two-lane road, to help preserve the village atmosphere.
- Maintain the greenway along Steele Ditch as a conservation corridor as shown in the Indianapolis Greenways Plan. However, a parkway that includes a bike and pedestrian path,

should be established along the south edge of Steele Ditch and be included in the Indianapolis thoroughfare system.

- Development within the area of Steele Ditch should not reduce the tree canopy. Dense vegetative cover along stream banks is important for erosion control, contaminant capture, water cooling (critical for retaining oxygen levels) and habitat preservation. Development within proximity of the greenway should also be mindful of steep slopes. These slopes should be minimally developed, if at all, so that they may retain their forest cover and avoid soil erosion.



## **Critical Area 8**

**Location:** The former Fort Benjamin Harrison area.

**Why Critical:** The former Fort Benjamin Harrison is a decommissioned Army base that has evolved into a mixed-use village. The City of Lawrence is in the process of moving their city center to this area. To maintain Fort Harrison's identity as a distinct place it has been designated as Village Mixed Use. To retain and enhance the town center character of Fort Harrison, it is critical to protect the current development patterns (mix of land uses; and the size, shape, and location of buildings on their sites). Residents have potentially good connectivity to schools, neighborhood retail, office-oriented businesses, and parks.

### **Recommendations:**

- Future development within the critical area should reflect the existing pattern of streets and lots.
- Pedestrian connectivity should be strengthened throughout the critical area by the construction and upkeep of sidewalks, paths, and safe street crossings.
- Continue to follow the development guidelines set by the Fort Harrison Reuse Authority.

## **Critical Area 9**

**Location:** North of 56<sup>th</sup> Street, East of Brendon Forrest Drive, South of Fall Creek.

**Why Critical:** This parcel along the east side of Brendon Forrest Drive consists of approximately 20 acres and is under development pressure. Development in this area should act as a buffer between the higher density residential to the east and the lower density residential to the west. It is critical to provide an appropriate transitional density for this area that is compatible with surrounding land uses. On the northern portion of the parcel, there are some high quality woodlands and slopes greater than 10% in the area that should be protected from over development.

### **Recommendations:**

- Do not allow any retail development to occur on this parcel.
- The land use recommendation for this parcel is 1.75 – 3.5 units per acre. Development of the parcel should allow for a higher density clustered residential development at the south end of the parcel, and a very low density residential development at the north end for a total density of 1.75 – 3.5 units per acre.
- If the parcel should be divided, then the land use recommendation should be changed to allow for a 3.5 – 5 units per acre cluster development in the southern portion of the parcel, closer to 56<sup>th</sup> Street. In the northern portion, the land use recommendation should be changed to allow for a 0 – 1.75 units per acre development.
- A significant amount of high quality and natural woodlands occurs on the northern edge of the critical area. Conservation of the oldest and highest quality portions of the woodlands is of particular importance. Development within this area should provide substantial conservation of the tree canopy.
- Dense vegetative cover along stream banks is important for erosion control, contaminant capture, water cooling (critical for retaining oxygen levels) and habitat preservation.
- In places, steep slopes define the edges of a stream valley. These slopes should be minimally developed, if at all, so that they may retain their forest cover and avoid soil erosion.
- Development within proximity of Woolens Gardens should also be mindful of soil erosion and possible chemical contamination of Fall Creek's water.

## **Critical Area 10**

**Location:** An area surrounding the intersection of 75<sup>th</sup> Street and Binford Boulevard, bounded by I-465 to the north and east, 71<sup>st</sup> Street to the south, and the Hoosier Heritage Port Authority railroad line to the west.

**Why Critical:** The area around East 75<sup>th</sup> Street and Binford Boulevard is expected to encounter significant changes in transportation infrastructure in future years. Located just south of the interchange of I-465 and I-69 and along a potential rapid transit corridor, land use patterns will need to adjust for several planned infrastructure expansions. The possible addition of rapid transit services can also transform this area from its current low-density suburban office and highway commercial character to transit oriented mixed-use development. Primary land use recommendations are based on development without a transit center. If the transit center plan should proceed, several alternative land use recommendations will be warranted within the critical area.

### **Recommendations:**

- Improve pedestrian and bicycles access between residential developments and between existing and proposed office and retail facilities, including the North Shadeland commercial corridor. This becomes still more important if a transit center is built.
- Identify and establish a “gateway corridor” for Binford Boulevard from I-465 southward. Use corridor overlay tools to create and preserve unique identifying features or characteristics of this corridor. Recognize the importance of lighting and signage controls given the visual importance of the corridor and the proximity of residential neighborhoods.
- Maximize the use of interior access or frontage roads and other accessibility features to minimize traffic congestion on thoroughfares. Maintain access controls on Binford Boulevard.
- If a transit center is built in this area, higher density development should within ¼ mile of transit stations (s). Both vacant sites and redevelopment sites should be built with transit supportive land uses and densities.

## **Critical Area 11**

**Location:** An area bounded by 82<sup>nd</sup> Street to the north, I-69 to the east, I-465 to the south, and the Hoosier Heritage Port Authority railroad line to the west

**Why Critical:** It is critical to plan for a possible transit center in this area. The 2001 Indianapolis Northeast Corridor Transportation Study identified this area as the I-465 Transit Center in the preferred rail-bus option. While transit studies continue on a regional basis, this previous study suggests that a transit center is a potentially significant land use in this area. Primary land use recommendations are based on development without a transit center. If the transit center plan should proceed, several alternative land use recommendations will be warranted within the critical area.

### **Recommendations:**

- Transit supportive land uses should be given priority throughout this critical area.
- Heavy commercial uses should be discouraged within ¼ mile of the transit center.
- Pedestrian linkages should be provided office-commercial facilities to the west of the rail line. The extensive employment destinations around Castleton Office Park / Castleway Drive should have safe and convenient access to mass transit services and transit related development within the critical area.
- A comprehensive system of sidewalks should be implemented within the critical area.
- The public street pattern should also be modified to accommodate added automobile and bus traffic.
- Although residential uses often are compatible within a transit-oriented development, this area should remain substantially a retail, commercial, lodging and office center. The proximity to heavy interstate traffic reduces the desirability of residential uses within the critical area.

## **Critical Area 12**

**Location:** Both sides of Mud Creek, from 96<sup>th</sup> Street on the north to Fall Creek Road on the south.

**Why critical:** The Mud Creek area contains a small feeder, or tributary, aquifer to the Fall Creek Aquifer, and thus will affect the future public water supply. The majority of the Mud Creek Critical Area is wooded, is susceptible to erosion with slopes greater than 10% and contains wetland areas. It is critical to protect Mud Creek as an environmentally sensitive natural area.

### **Recommendations:**

- Maintain the greenway along Mud Creek as a conservation corridor as shown in the Indianapolis Greenways Plan. Development within this area should not reduce the tree canopy. Dense vegetative cover along Mud Creek stream banks is important for erosion control, contaminant capture, water cooling (critical for retaining oxygen levels) and habitat preservation. Development within proximity of Mud Creek should also be mindful of soil erosion and possible chemical contamination of the creek's water.
- Development within proximity of the Wellfield Protection Area should be mindful of possible chemical contamination of the ground water.
- Protect the wetlands within this area. Wetlands contribute to stream water quality by holding and filtering storm water.
- Protect the area as a feeder, or tributary, aquifer to the Fall Creek Aquifer, which will provide drinking water to the northeast metropolitan area.
- Minimize impervious surface area to reduce the chance of flooding and to allow more rainwater to reach the aquifer.
- Conservation of the oldest and highest quality portions of the woodlands is of particular importance.
- In places, steep slopes define the edges of the stream valley. These slopes should be minimally developed, if at all, so that they may retain their forest cover and avoid soil erosion.
- The proposed park north of 82nd Street, on the east side of Sargent Road will provide needed community park space. The site contains natural areas (woods, floodplain) for conservation and passive recreation and some open area for more active recreation.
- The proposed park in the 9400 block of Mud Creek Road will provide needed community park space. The site contains some natural areas (woods, steep slopes, floodplain) for conservation and passive recreation. Some of the site is an open grassy area that is conducive to a variety of more active recreation pursuits.